

*Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health  
Course Outline*

# **NURS/MIDW 594**

**Thesis**

**MA (Applied) / MN (Clinical)**

**Course Co-ordinator:**

**Cheryle Moss**

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI



**VICTORIA**  
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

**2008**

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health at Victoria University of Wellington, uses all reasonable skill and care in an effort to ensure the information and course content information contained in this outline is accurate at the time of going to print.

Students should be aware, however, that in the event course timetables and venues need to be changed, all attempts will be made to notify the students.

Produced by the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health,  
81 Fairlie Terrace, Kelburn, Wellington 6021.

© Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health - January 2008

# STAFF TEACHING IN THIS COURSE

---

Cheryle Moss, Associate Professor

Ph: 04 463 6141

Email: [cheryle.moss@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:cheryle.moss@vuw.ac.nz)

Jo Walton, Professor

Ph: 04 463 6135

Email: [jo.walton@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:jo.walton@vuw.ac.nz)

## ACADEMIC STAFF SUPERVISING 594 RESEARCH PROJECTS

<b>Staff member</b>	<b>Telephone number</b>	<b>Email-address</b>
Dr Jan Duke	04 463 5034	jan.duke@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Margi Martin	04 463 6140	margaret.martin@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Rose McEldowney	04 463 6651	rose.mcelandowney@vuw.ac.nz
Ms Robyn Maude	04 463 6137	robyn.maunder@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Karen McBride-Henry	04 385 5999 ext 4813	karen.mcbride-henry@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Cheryle Moss	04 463 6141	cheryle.moss@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Kathy Nelson	04 463 6138	kathy.nelson@vuw.ac.nz
Ms Thelma Puckey	04 463 6648	thelma.puckey@vuw.ac.nz
Ms Sara Quirke	04 463 6151	sara.quirke@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Joan Skinner	04 463 6654	joan.skinner@vuw.ac.nz
Ms Chris Walsh	04 463 6652	chris.walsh@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Jo Walton	04 463 6135	jo.walton@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Jan Weststrate	04 385 5999 ext 4813	jan.weststrate@vuw.ac.nz
Dr Pamela Wood	04 463 6650	pamela.wood@vuw.ac.nz

## STUDENT ADMINISTRATOR

Abbey McDonald

Ph: 04 463 6144

Email: [abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz)

# CONTACT DETAILS

---

## POSTAL ADDRESS

Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health  
Victoria University of Wellington  
P O Box 600  
Wellington 6140

## PHYSICAL ADDRESS

The Fieldhouse Centre  
Victoria University of Wellington  
81 & 83 Fairlie Terrace  
Kelburn  
Wellington 6021

Phone: (04) 463 5363 or  
0800 108 005 Freephone Graduate School Administration

Fax: (04) 463 5442

Email: [nmh@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:nmh@vuw.ac.nz)

Web site: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/nmh>

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm

## GRADUATE SCHOOL DATES

The Graduate School office will be open on Wednesday 3 January 2008 and close on Tuesday 23 December 2008.

In keeping with the practice of other years, academic staff will not be available on Fridays, except for the times they are involved in Schools.

# **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

---

This course introduces students to the practice of research. Students undertake a small scale research project within a negotiated or advertised topic area under the guidance of a supervisor. This research may be a theoretical study or involve fieldwork. The results of the research are presented in the form of a thesis. Emphasis in the course is placed on learning the practices of research and positioning research inquiry in relation to health needs and professional practice. Students also pay attention to learning how to demonstrate the relevance of research findings to health outcomes, clinical/professional practice, for example in professional presentations, submissions and publication. The final thesis will report on the generation and synthesis of knowledge and make a contribution to the practice discipline of nursing or midwifery.

Students elect to complete this course in their final year of enrolment in the MA (Applied) or MN (Clinical), after they have completed the main body of coursework in the degree. The NURS/MIDW 594 Thesis constitutes 90 points of study in the MA (Applied) or MN (Clinical).

This full-year course is run over 12 months of the year.

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) Guidelines for Masters Students contains details of the regulations, general expectations and practical advice for research students. This course outline should be read in conjunction with the Guidelines which can be found on the FHSS website at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/degrees/docs/masters-guidelines-07.pdf>

Please read these Guidelines carefully and if necessary, discuss aspects with your supervisor for clarification.

# **COURSE AIMS**

---

The aim of this course is to provide a time in which students will increase their awareness of the demands and delights of research, and which will encourage them to go on and develop their own skills and research style.

# **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

---

Participants in this course will be encouraged to:

- make a scientific/scholarly contribution to the discipline of nursing or midwifery by developing, implementing and evaluating a small academic/research project,
- develop their ability to apply a nominated paradigm, perspective or methodology to a specific research topic, problem or hypothesis,
- conceive, describe and substantiate a way of undertaking scholarly/ research inquiry into a chosen topic, issue, problem or hypothesis,
- develop under supervision their skills as neophyte researchers,
- become familiar with the requirements for the preparation and presentation of a research report in the form of a thesis,
- develop insights into and an appreciation of the research processes, and the practicalities of a range of research practices and realities,
- participate in and contribute to a nominated research community, and
- develop skills in peer support during the research process.

Plan with a designated supervisor a co-authored paper for publication based on the 594 research.

# **RECOMMENDED READING/TEXT**

---

For this course you will find it helpful to read a range of textbooks and theses. Previous students in this course report that they found it helpful to explore various texts which either demonstrate or are about writing skills. These texts range from very formal approaches to academic writing through to more creative prose and novels. Texts which concern the processes of research may contribute substantive and practical advice. We encourage you to explore the thesis collection of this and other universities, to gain a sense of appreciation of some of the more general ways of approaching a thesis, as well as some sense of the creative diversity which this kind of scholarship offers students of a discipline. Additionally, we recommend that you purchase or have access to a copy of the 'Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association' (APA) 5<sup>th</sup> Edition for guidance regarding referencing styles.

# **WORKLOAD**

---

90 point courses in the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health have an average full-time workload of 36 hours per week.

# **MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

---

In order to successfully complete this course you are required to attend all Schools unless under special circumstances prior arrangements have been made with the course co-ordinator.

Students must submit and pass all pieces of assessment to satisfactorily complete the course.

# **GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES**

---

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the VUW homepage at:

[http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about\\_victoria/calendar\\_intro.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html)

Information on the following topics is available electronically at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

# **RESEARCH GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS**

---

Research is expensive and regardless of research design you should generate a budget for your NURS/MIDW 594 project. Your supervisor will help you work through the central aspects of this in relation to your actual project.

Many sources of research support or research funding are available to Master's students, and you should explore options available to you. Many of our students negotiate or receive small study grants, awards or scholarships from their employers towards their research (e.g. course fees, course and research travel and other research costs). Other groups such as professional bodies and clinical groups often advertise grants, scholarships, and awards for which you may be able to apply. Please discuss correct processes with your supervisor before making any application.

The FHSS Research Committee also accepts applications for small research grants from Master's research students. These competitive and merit-based grants are limited to \$250 for research related costs. See your supervisor for details.

The Research Fellow and Postgraduate Student Policy for research grants can be found on the FHSS website at: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/fhss/research/committees>

More information can be found on the VUW Scholarships website at: [http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/scholarships\\_prizes.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/scholarships_prizes.html)

Any support you receive should be acknowledged in your thesis.



# **RESEARCH TUITION & SCHOOLS**

---

## **Supervision**

The primary form of tuition in this course is provided by the processes of supervision. Sessions with your supervisor should be planned to occur monthly as a minimum throughout your candidature. At various stages during the candidature supervision sessions will need to occur more frequently than this. Research supervision provides a very specific form of supervision, in that very close attention is paid to your particular project and your ideas and skills in relation to it. Many students avail themselves of the opportunity to meet with their supervisor(s) prior to or directly following research Schools. We also try to arrange a time during the Schools for supervision sessions.

## **Research Schools**

Another key aspect of tuition occurs through the processes of research Schools. In the Schools we aim to provide opportunities for discussing research issues and strategies with your peers and the academic staff of this Graduate School. The Schools provide a different form of research training, as discussion supports a range of projects and the ideas surrounding them. The Schools also provide opportunities for peer review of each others' work, in a supportive environment.

In each of the Schools we strive to create a balance between more formal teaching sessions and sessions which are designed to help you express and explore your work and that of your peers. In each school, time will be set aside for you to present an aspect of your work to your peers and to the staff of the Graduate School. Students are expected to generate a formal presentation of their work in progress and to raise thoughtful dialogue in relation to discoveries, new knowledge, emerging questions, and issues that are critical to their work and thesis development. The plan for presentations should be discussed with your supervisor.

The Graduate School has a commitment to provide a range of perspectives into the research Schools. This is achieved primarily by a team of nominated academic staff who will be present across all days of the Schools. These colleagues will offer insights to provide continuity for your research journey and knowledge of the Graduate School and/or University's systems and processes. Additionally, a number of invited guests will have been chosen by the academic staff to be in attendance at the Schools. These colleagues have an important role in offering external and often international perspectives on the scholastic endeavours and research journeys of each student. Where possible, supervisors will attend students' presentations.

## **General Framework For Progress**

It is anticipated that prior to attending the first School, students will have given considerable thought to their thesis topic and will have commenced reading widely and tracking their thinking related to their project. In the early phase of candidature students attend their first research School and meet other students. Building connections with each other as a community of research students is an important aspect of research candidature.

During the School, students present their research in progress, engage in peer and critical review of research thinking and associated activities, and participate in focused teaching/learning sessions which address theoretical and practical aspects of undertaking research in nursing and midwifery. Once work is commenced with a supervisor, students spend the next few months refining their study proposals and undertaking necessary theoretical and background work on the project. If ethical approval is required, applications are completed and submitted during this early phase of candidature. Initial pieces of work on the topic itself, the related literature and proposed design, including methodology if appropriate, should now be in draft form.

By the middle third of candidature, students are expected to be in the 'thick' of their projects and concerned with the day-to-day practicalities of advancing their ideas in relation to research material. For those students undertaking data collection, this period involves data collection and analysis. For those undertaking other types of study, this period should evolve the key arguments and theoretical synthesis of the inquiry. During this stage the form of the thesis and shape of the overall research should be apparent. Students are expected to have completed early writing in relation to this. Students by now should be working with their supervisors to identify critical ideas, arguments and analysis in their thesis. A first draft of most chapters of the thesis should be under development or nearing completion by the end of the middle third of candidature.

The Research Student Writing Week is designed to support students to build on their thesis writing skills to gain insights into methods of critically reviewing their draft writing, producing 'large' theoretical/academic documents, and to highlight ways of strengthening academic and theoretical coherence and congruence in thesis work. During the writing week students continue to mix with their NURS/MIDW 594 peers and will meet and mix with research students who are enrolled in other nursing and midwifery degrees.

The format to the second School is similar to the first School. Students continue to present their research work in progress and to critically review each others' work. Lectures and teaching sessions about research also continue. Students are usually delighted by the progress that the class as a whole is making, and are feeling much more confident about their growing understandings of research practices and thesis work in general.

During the final third of their candidature, students should be in a position to identify what their scholarly contribution is likely to be, and well able to identify the line, argument and the coherence in the outline of their thesis. A first complete draft of the thesis is expected shortly after the commencement of this period. The time between this and the end of candidature should be spent in editing and refining the draft thesis work. Revision of draft thesis work to get it ready for submission usually requires 2-3 cycles of reworking text.

A polished final draft should be presented to the Graduate School for critical internal review before the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> month of candidature. The last month of candidature should be spent in a process of final editing. Once the thesis is submitted for examination, students should busy themselves preparing draft reports for their respective ethics committees, funding authorities, and/or participants as required. On completion of candidature, students are expected to work their supervisor to submit for publication at least one paper relating to their research activities and findings (refer to the 'Memorandum of Understanding for Research Supervision of Postgraduate Student').

Once the examiners' reports are received by the student, students are required to devote time to prepare the thesis for lodgement and to conclude any other formalities associated with their research.

# **SCHOOL CATERING**

---

The Graduate School will provide **a light snack for lunch**, and tea and coffee for morning and afternoon break while students are attending Schools. While we try to cater for the majority of students please feel free to bring your own supplies if your needs are not being met.

During the lunch breaks you may wish to investigate a variety of student cafes within walking distance on campus and several cafes at Kelburn shops approximately 10 minutes walk from the School.

# COURSE TIMETABLE

Note: Students who enrol in March attend the February 2008, May 2008 (Writing Week), and August 2008 Schools; while those who enrol in August 2008 attend the August 2008, February 2009 Schools, and May 2009 Writing Week.

Dates for the February 2009 School and May 2009 Writing Week will be advised mid 2008.

WEEK STARTING Monday	DATES	EVENT	ACTION
4 February	<b>6 February</b>	Waitangi Day	
11 February	<b>11 – 13 February</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> School (August intake) 1<sup>st</sup> School (March intake)</b>	<b>Bring a blank CDRW, and a 1 page outline of your presentation and critical questions</b>
18 February			
25 February			
3 March			
10 March			
17 March	21 March	Good Friday	
24 March	24 March 25 March	Easter Monday VUW holiday	
31 March			
7 April			
14 April	25 April	ANZAC Day	
21 April			
28 April			
5 May			
12 May	<b>19 - 22 May</b>	<b>Writing Week</b>	<b>Bring your own laptop – if possible</b>
19 May			
26 May	2 June	Queens Birthday	
2 June			
9 June			
16 June			
23 June			
30 June			
7 July			
14 July			
21 July			
28 July			
4 August	<b>4 – 6 August</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> School (March intake) 1<sup>st</sup> School (August intake)</b>	<b>Bring a blank CDRW, and a 1 page outline of your presentation and critical questions</b>
11 August			
18 August			
25 August			
1 September			
8 September			
15 September			
22 September			

# **SCHOOL TIMETABLE**

---

## **1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> SCHOOLS**

Dates: 11 - 13 February 2008 and 4 - 6 August 2008

Times: 9.00am - 5.00pm

Main Venue: Room 203, 83 Fairlie Terrace, Kelburn, Wellington

---

### Preparation prior to School...

There is an expectation that students will prepare two things for Schools. These include creating a class presentation (PowerPoint) and writing a one page class handout that summarises the key points of your presentation and critical questions that you pose in relation to your thesis work (discuss actual content and plan with your supervisor).

Actual presentation times will be determined during the School. A draft class timetable for each School will be sent by email prior to the School.

### During the School...

Participate in a research community process – Each student will present (20 minute session) their research in progress and invite research dialogue with their peers and academic staff. Students as a group will be expected to provide critical companionship to their peers during class presentations and to use this time as a way of growing their general knowledge about research and thesis work. Please bring a blank CD to record your session and the dialogue that ensues (for your own purposes).

Engage thoughtfully with the other formal teaching and learning processes. In addition to student presentations each School will address a variety of research and thesis topics. Presentations from academic staff, former students and other guests will be provided.

Supervision and other University interactions. During School some time will be allocated for formal supervision (particularly for out of town students), visits to the Library (University thesis collection and other materials), and other research related activities (e.g. working in the computing lab, sorting grant applications, visiting the PGSA, and using Student Learning Support).

# **RESEARCH STUDENT WRITING WEEK**

---

Dates: Monday 19 to Friday 23 May

Times: 9.00am - 5.00pm

Main Venue: Room 203, 83 Fairlie Terrace, Kelburn, Wellington

---

All NURS/MIDW 594 research students are expected to attend the Monday and Tuesday of Research Student Writing Week and are encouraged to attend the full five days.

The writing week is an opportunity for all research students enrolled in the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health to create a focused time of learning about writing thesis documents, and to spend time progressing their writing.

Writing is one of the great challenges of research, and the writing week is designed to provide real-time opportunities for students to sit and write. On the Monday and Tuesday an array of seminars on writing will be held. Topics include: technical aspects of writing; getting on with writing; presentation of text; presenting your work to others; working with literature; advanced database searching and reference retrieval; and using Endnote. On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday there are no formal sessions, just time to sit and write.

What to bring to the School - lots of energy and focus for your writing and your own resources for writing. Most students bring their own laptop computers (extension cords/adaptors); some students prefer to write directly onto notepaper. The Graduate School's computing lab will be available. Other computers are available (for booking) throughout the University.

Prior to the writing week, make a time for supervision with your supervisor during the week.

# **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RESEARCH THESIS**

A NURS/MIDW 594 thesis is normally in the range of 20,000 to 30,000 words, and cannot exceed 40,000 words (including references and appendices) without approval from the NURS/MIDW 594 Research Management Student (RMS) Committee.

It is a small research project that should be able to be completed within 12 months part time. This size and scale means that the research will be limited in regards to the complexity of the topic, the number of objectives to be met, and the extent that some methodologies will be able to be fully operationalised.

While all projects will contribute to new knowledge, the focus of the thesis is to demonstrate the ability to conduct and carry out a research project.

This project is undertaken over 12 months, and often involves the conduct and report of a small research project, in which you undertake a field study or socio-historical research, or focus on a conceptual problem. You may choose, for example, to conduct your research within an empirical, interpretive, critical or feminist framework, to carry out action research, to review and re-analyse a theoretical theme presented in the courses already completed, or to pursue historical or philosophical research in order to develop a deeper understanding of a nursing or midwifery issue. There is no expectation that the work for this project is 'original' in conception. You may choose to replicate or modify a study which has been undertaken somewhere else by someone else.

Whatever your nominated topic and methodology, your report must conform to academic standards. In particular, expressed opinions should follow from the information collected or the arguments developed. It is also important that the ideas of others should be acknowledged and not used arbitrarily. Repeated uncritically, the ideas of other authors do not make a research project, nor do sets of quotations, no matter how skilfully put together, nor does the mere reporting of empirical data collected, no matter how extensive. It is essential that ideas, literature and data should be analysed, organised and subjected to critique, resulting in a new creation that has originated with you.

## **Literature Review**

The GSNMH Liaison Librarian is available to help you with searches for source material. Libraries are a good source of information. As well as looking through the books and periodicals available there, you should also consult indexes and computerised databases, such as CINAHL, which contain a wealth of relevant entries. In addition, most libraries have a range of computer search facilities. Consult the reference librarians at the library to find out how you can fully utilise library services. Audio-visual materials, interviews, old newspapers, Hansards, magazines, letters and biographies can be obtained through most libraries. A good research thesis relies on original source material when it is available, though both original sources and sources quoted by others are admissible.

A substantial review of the relevant literature on the research topic or problem is likely to form a major part of your project. A literature review describes the state of play in the area selected for study. In this case, it describes the point reached by the discipline of nursing or midwifery with respect to the topic you have chosen. An effective literature review is not merely a summary of research studies and their findings. Rather, it represents a "distillation" of the essential issues and

inter-relationships associated with the knowledge, arguments and themes that have been explored in the area. A literature review commonly seeks to address the following:

1. What is the purpose of the literature review? (For example: What is the relationship between the literature review and the research questions that are considered to be important in the area that has been selected for study?)
2. Who has written about the area? (For example: What do the practitioners, administrators, researchers, governments, community, media, etc. have to say about the area?)
3. What has been written about the area? (For example: What key propositions have been made? Do these propositions fall into a few key areas? What has been seen as problematic? Have solutions and/or actions been proposed and/or tested in response to perceived difficulties?)
4. How has this material been received by other scholars? (For example: Has this material been accommodated within existing paradigms? Has this material challenged existing knowledge and theory, or does it serve to reinforce current conceptions?)
5. What types of research studies have been carried out in the area? (For example: What research methods have been employed in these studies? Have these research methods been appropriate in terms of the research questions that have been investigated?)
6. What are the major findings associated with these studies?
7. Are the research findings across the various studies consistent, or conflicting, or both?
8. What debates have there been in the area with respect to both substantive and methodological aspects?
9. What have been the main issues involved in these debates?
10. What important issues appear to have been overlooked in the area? (For example: Are there any gaps, omissions, or "silences" in the literature?)
11. Taking an overview of points 1 to 10 above, what "common threads" emerge in terms of issues, debates, research findings and themes?
12. How can these "common threads" guide an evaluation of the knowledge that has been gathered to date, and how can they be employed to propose important and potentially fruitful areas for further enquiry?

## **Finalising a Topic**

It is commonly believed that research always involves doing some explicitly empirical work – collecting information in the field – but this is a misconception. You may, for example, design a research project which aims to explore a conceptual problem, investigate a socio-cultural or historical phenomenon, or enlarge our understanding of lived experience. The academic rigour expected in such research is profound, however, and it is not to be regarded as a 'soft option'. Research enables you to work systematically with a topic you have become interested in during the course of your enrolment in the MA (Applied) or MN (Clinical), or an issue that may be of practical importance in the context of your work. Choosing the right topic is extremely important.

A carefully chosen topic and the development of a tight research protocol are major factors in achieving the success of your project. Sometimes a research project turns out to be a mistake because an inadequate, vague, trivial, hackneyed or overly ambitious topic was selected. Another common mistake is to attempt a research topic that is too broad.



In choosing the topic, you should consider whether the study is feasible and whether the problem or issue is a significant one. It is prudent to choose a topic with which you are familiar and about which you would like to know more. Ideally it should arise out of the theoretical material and practical dilemmas that you have encountered in the courses which you have already completed and the assessments you have undertaken.

While you alone can judge whether the time, effort and expense for tackling a particular problem are justified, the School will assist with judging the feasibility of the project for the award. The School acknowledges the importance of students being supervised by academics with the right expertise. For this reason, research topics or areas in which our staff have particular strengths are advertised and students are encouraged to select a topic that aligns with the research platforms within the School. One advantage of this is that students are able to work in small clusters – 2 or 3 students pursuing related topics of research helps to make the research experience shared and less isolating. The Graduate School also needs to be satisfied that the ethical issues raised with the research project can be satisfactorily managed according to the School's standards.

## **Supervision**

As we select appropriate supervisors for your project, we try to take into account a number of factors such as knowledge and skills with the proposed content and methods, teaching-learning styles, and thinking and personality compatibility. Despite these considerations sometimes supervision arrangements do not work out. If there are issues we suggest that in the first instance you talk with your supervisor about them. If the issues cannot be agreed to your mutual satisfaction, then it is important to consult with the Administrative Supervisor.

The statement of student and supervisor responsibilities is contained in the attached Memorandum of Understanding for Research Supervision of Postgraduate Students. Please take time to read it carefully. The primary responsibility of the supervisor is to assist you to complete the research and submit the thesis within an agreed timeframe. You are expected to take responsibility for independently pursuing research under the guidance of your supervisor in a manner that develops your own intellectual independence.

## **RESEARCH AND ETHICAL ISSUES**

---

Field work research raises questions about ethics, such as securing genuinely informed consent, and the confidentiality of the material you obtain and finally include in your research project. If you are a 'participant observer', for example, you may find yourself in the position of having access to information which, if released, may be embarrassing or detrimental to the interests of certain people in the organisation you study. You should, therefore, adopt adequate measures in the writing of your final report to negotiate release and/or to make anonymous the institution and the people portrayed.

You are required to gain approval from the appropriate ethics committee before commencing field research, especially if it involves human participants. The committee you are most likely to require approval from is either the Victoria University Human Ethics Committee (HEC) or a Health Research Council Regional or National Ethics Committee. You may also require ethical approval from your employing organisation and/or health provider institutional ethics committee. Each of these committees uses its own format which is reviewed regularly.

## **Guidelines For Ethics Approval**

Please be guided by your supervisor regarding ethical approval processes. Also ensure you acquire the most recently issued format for your application.

All research involving users of health services or health records requires a Health and Disability ethics application which can be accessed from the Health and Disability Ethics website at: <http://www.ethicscommittees.health.govt.nz/>

NB: There are a number of different application forms. All applications require a Locality Agreement.

VUW Human Ethics Committee applications are required for all other research that uses human participants. Form and guidelines can be accessed from the My Victoria Portal 'Research' tab.

### **The Ethics Process**

- The Student establishes with supervisor the appropriate ethics committee(s) and drafts application in consultation with supervisor. Forms available from above websites or other organisations e.g. Plunket.
- Once final version ready, a full copy is forwarded to the Supervisor and Head of School for signing. Amendments may be necessary. The signed copy is returned to the student.
- The student submits the ethics application(s) to appropriate ethics committee(s)
- The Student sends two copies of all correspondence (e.g. approval letter; any changes required by committee and response by student to these) to the Student Administrator for forwarding to the appropriate ethics committee(s).
- Ethics approval requires that a report be forwarded annually and at the completion of research. Following lodgement of thesis, the student sends a written report to the appropriate ethics committee(s) and two copies to the Student Administrator.

## **AUTHORSHIP AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The University has a clear position in relation authorship, acknowledgement of support, and academic misconduct. The relevant statements are offered below.

### **Authorship and Acknowledgement**

It must be clearly understood that:

- (a) The thesis presented for the MA (Applied) or MN (Clinical) degree must be the candidate's own work and must have been prepared for this degree. It must not contain work extracted from a thesis, dissertation or research paper already presented by the author for another degree or diploma at this or any other University.
- (b) Any material quoted from another author's work (published or unpublished) must be clearly referenced and acknowledged in the main text of the thesis.

All candidates will be asked to sign a statement to this effect when the thesis is submitted.

It is important that all assistance which candidates have received in their research be clearly acknowledged in the thesis. It is the principal supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the thesis as presented is the candidate's own work, and that candidates make it clear what, if any, assistance they have received from other persons. This will ensure that external examiners are in no doubt as to the fact that the work they are assessing is that of the candidate. It is necessary that a statement about any assistance of the kind envisaged is included in the certificate which the supervisor provides when the thesis is submitted.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic/research misconduct is unacceptable within the university environment and the wider New Zealand and international research community. MA (Applied) or MN (Clinical) candidates are advised that the University has made provision for dealing with cases of academic misconduct, which is defined in the Statute on Student Conduct <http://policy.vuw.ac.nz/>

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM**

---

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means no cheating. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

*The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

*Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.*

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website: [www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html)

# **PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH THESIS**

This section contains information on the presentation, binding, and availability of the thesis.

Nearly all candidates find that the actual writing of a thesis takes much longer than expected. The preparation of a first draft may be the most difficult part of the work, but its transformation into the final draft for submission usually takes much longer than planned.

The University does not provide finance for the production of theses.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring compliance with this guide which is best consulted at an early stage of the candidature. Candidates should check details of presentation and production with the principal supervisor before final preparation of the thesis.

## **Layout**

It is recommended that the contents of the thesis be presented in the following order:

- Title page: A specimen page is provided on the next page.
- Abstract: The regulations require that the thesis should include a short abstract, providing a summary of the methods of investigation and conclusions reached in a form suitable for publication. The abstract must not exceed 500 words. A length of about 300 words is recommended.
- Key words: Four key words should be listed below your abstract.
- Preface: A preface may not be necessary as the abstract can state the scope of the study.
- Acknowledgements: The candidate is required to acknowledge all assistance that has been received with the research and production of the thesis.
- Table of contents: Candidates should list chapters with relevant page numbers. If the thesis consists of more than one volume candidates should show the contents of all volumes on the contents page of the first volume. Separate contents pages should also be included in subsequent volumes.
- List of illustrations, etc: All illustrations should be numbered and page references given. If your thesis contains a large quantity of folded material it may be advisable to contain it in a special folder or pocket at the end of the volume, or in a separate companion volume or box.
- Body of the text: Relevant advice is provided below in the section headed "Format".
- Appendices (if applicable): Candidates may wish to include here any material that does not fit conveniently into the body of the text.
- References and/or Bibliography (APA style).

**THIS REPRESENTS THE FULL TITLE OF THE THESIS**

**by**

**Candidate's Full Name**

**A thesis submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington  
in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Nursing (Clinical)\*  
or Master of Arts (Applied) in Nursing\*  
or Master of Arts (Applied) in Midwifery\*  
*\*Delete which does not apply***

**Victoria University of Wellington**

**2008**

## **Citation Style**

Particular disciplines often have individual citation conventions. Be sure to conform consistently to the standards considered appropriate for the relevant discipline; in cases of doubt the full form should be used rather than the abbreviations. The Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health uses APA 5<sup>th</sup> edition style for referencing.

## **Format**

1. Microsoft Word, printed in 12 point font is recommended.
2. The thesis should be printed single-sided. Lines should either be double spaced or one and a half spaces apart. Leave a margin of 2 cm on the left or binding side of the page, uniform on all pages, including diagrams and charts. On the other three sides of the page the margins should be not less than 1.5 cm as the edges will be trimmed by the binders and there must be no danger of losing part of the text, especially the footnotes.
3. Candidates may also wish to distinguish quotations from the main text by using single spacing, or a different font or style.

## **Pagination**

1. Pages must be numbered consecutively and page numbers should appear on every page in a consistent position, except the title page which is normally counted but not numbered.
2. The main body of the text should be numbered in Arabic numerals but it is acceptable to assign Roman numerals in lower-case to preliminary pages (title page, abstract, table of contents etc.).
3. Interpolated leaves - illustrations, maps or charts - should be included in the main numbering sequence.
4. Avoid, if possible, sub-numbering of pages/leaves (e.g.. 115 (a), 115 (b) etc.)

## **Paper**

1. The physical appearance of the thesis is very important. The paper used should be A4 size and of good quality. It is essential that all pages be of the same size so that they may be readily bound together.
2. Larger material such as charts, diagrams and maps may be folded to conform to A4 size.

## **Photographic and Colour Copy Illustrations**

1. Photographs should be inserted into the electronic copy of your thesis in JPEG (.jpg) format. In the hard copy they should be dry mounted, or mounted on guard sheets. Sellotape or photographic mounts should never be used. It is recommended that photographs be mounted on heavier paper than that used for the main text.
2. Fuji-Xerox (Easterfield Building) provides a full range of copy services including colour copying, suitable for graphics and colour photograph reproduction.

## **Binding**

1. Soft-bound/Thermal Binding For Examination
  - The Faculty Office requires candidates to submit the three copies of their thesis for examination in soft/thermal binding, to facilitate any revisions or corrections. The binding must be in the approved format set by the University Library.
  - Candidates must find out the specifications from Abbey McDonald to ensure that the thesis binding conforms with the Library requirements.

## 2. Hard Binding of the Thesis

- The candidate is solely responsible for having the thesis bound after the examination to the satisfaction of the University Librarian, for deposit in the University Library. The degree will not be awarded until this has been done.
- The thesis must be fully bound, never stapled, and cased in cloth or buckram, preferably purple. The author's name and initials and the short title must be on the spine. The author's full name and the full title must on the front cover. A letter will be sent from the Graduate School outlining the requirements.

## Availability

### 1. Public Availability of Theses

- The University HEC guidelines require that research results must be disseminated and not kept secret. It is an important component of the university tradition that knowledge is openly available for examination and criticism by peers.
- The University is now compiling a Digital Research Repository. The primary purpose of the repository is to provide open, web-based, long term access to University research such as theses and academic papers. In doing so the project aims to increase both the visibility and the impact of research produced by staff and postgraduates of VUW. By giving permission for your thesis to be added to the repository, the full text of your work will become easily accessible to the world-wide research community. It is expected that all Graduate School theses will be added to the repository, and therefore you should complete the declaration form and return it with your hard bound thesis.

### 2. Deposit

- Completed theses are deposited in the University Library on the understanding that completed work becomes an important part of the Library resources and may be consulted by other researchers. It is desirable that research by one person should be available to other scholars working in the field
- A minimum of **three** bound copies are required upon receipt of advice from the Faculty Office that the degree is to be awarded. The first copy is lodged in the library; the second copy in the Graduate School; and the third bound copy is retained by the candidate.
- An electronic copy on CD is required to be lodged at the Graduate School. The thesis should be in one file – Microsoft Word format, with all graphics, photographs, illustrations and appendices scanned as a JPEG file and inserted into the Word document.

### 3. Copyright

- This still belongs to the author following deposit, and redress for plagiarism can be sought under the laws protecting copyright.

### 4. Withholding Access To Theses

- Sometimes there may be a potentially "good reason" why a thesis should be not available for consultation for a given limited period.
- In such cases, candidates should apply for withholding of access for a given period at the outset of research, or as soon as the need for an embargo becomes apparent, to the Academic Committee. If application is delayed there could be a difficulty if the Academic Committee subsequently declines the application after the research has been completed. The application must also be supported by the Head of the Graduate School.

# **SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

---

90 point research projects will be assessed by two examiners, one of whom will normally be an academic staff member within the Graduate School. This will not be the supervisor. The second examiner will be from another institution either within New Zealand or from overseas. These examiners will be appointed by the Graduate School's Research and Ethics Committee in light of recommendations received from the supervisor(s) (in consultation with the Head of the Graduate School). You may request that a particular examiner not be appointed, before, but not after, the Committee makes its decision. Your supervisor will discuss this matter with you as your work progresses towards submission.

You must ensure that you submit the final draft to your allocated supervisor to ensure that they recommend that the work is ready for submission and your work conforms to all relevant regulations and guidelines.

**Three copies** of your thesis should be submitted for examination, bound according to the University's guidelines for temporary binding (see previous section). The Graduate School will advise where these are to be sent.

**Final submission date for students who enrol in March 2008 is 28 February 2009.**

**Final submission date for students who enrol in August 2008 is 31 July 2009.**

Each examiner will recommend the awarding of a grade according to quality of the work undertaken and submitted by you.

The University requires examiners to submit a written report which includes their opinion, supported by adequate comment, on the quality of the thesis. They are also required to give a clear recommendation as to whether the thesis should be accepted unconditionally or subject to amendments, or whether it should be returned to the candidate for revision and re-submission at a later date, or whether it should be rejected as unsatisfactory and the candidate be advised that revision and re-submission will not be permitted. Examination reports are moderated within the School by an examination committee.

The examination process can take up to 3 months and you would not normally have contact with your supervisor about the examination process during this time.



## **POST EXAMINATION**

---

Party and celebrations are appropriate at this point.

Most students are required to make some changes to their thesis post examination, and before lodging the thesis. A request is made that these changes be completed within a one-month period post-receipt of the examination reports from the Faculty.

Reports promised and required as part of the research are to be sent. Reports can include those to participants, advisors, funding agencies, employers, ethics committees and relevant agencies.

Plan the publication and dissemination process with your supervisor. The Graduate School expects a paper for publication (the research and findings) from each student, normally this will be a joint publication with supervisors. In any presentation or publication on the research the Graduate School should be formally acknowledged for the assistance provided during the completion of the research. There is a powerpoint template available for this presentations.

Information on presentations and publications from the thesis should be provided to your supervisor or the Course Co-ordinator for inclusion in the University research reporting.

Discuss with your supervisor future research projects that you might like to undertake in association with the Graduate School.

## **CONFERENCE & SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS**

---

Students of the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health are encouraged to present their work at professional conferences and as papers for publication. Students should discuss this with the course co-ordinator in the first instance. Dissemination of findings from academic work is a very important part of graduate education and assists clinical teams and professional groups to access up-to-date and new knowledge. Course co-ordinators will provide academic guidance in relation to the targeted activities, and also in relation to the proper academic processes of authorship and acknowledgement.

For all conference, professional and workplace presentations our VUW Power Point template should be used. You are also required to use this template for all school presentations as part of your assignment requirements. This template is available and can be accessed by those students using Blackboard or you can email: [abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz) for a copy of the template to be sent to you.

As a general rule, presentations and papers should cite yourselves as post-graduate students, and name the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health as the organisation. In keeping with academic conventions course co-ordinators and teaching associates who help with the ideas and preparation of the paper/presentation should be directly acknowledged or named as co-authors.

# SCHOLARLY OUTCOMES

---

The Graduate School and the University take great pride in the achievements of research students. Research student achievements also need to be formally recorded by the University. We ask as a minimum that you let us know these on completion of your studies. Many students prefer to send the advice to us with copies of grants and publications as they occur. Please talk to your supervisor about the process that you will use to record your achievements.

You are required to complete and submit this form Record of Special Achievements related to Study at Victoria ( proforma follows).

**March 2008 intake please present this report to Chris Fox by 1 April 2009**

**August 2008 intake please present this report to Chris Fox by 1 September 2009**

Return:

Preferably, by email to: [chris.fox@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:chris.fox@vuw.ac.nz)

Alternatively, mail to: Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery & Health,  
Victoria University, PO Box 600, Wellington

Or fax to: 04 463 5442

If you would prefer to complete and submit this form electronically, a copy of the form can be located on Blackboard, our website <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/nsemid/research/student-achievements.aspx> or you could contact [abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz) to request a copy.

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NURSING, MIDWIFERY & HEALTH**  
**Record of Special Achievements related to Study at Victoria**

At the end of each year the Graduate School reports to the University details of student special achievements (such as awards, grants, presentations, and publications). Please complete this form and **submit with your final assignment for the course**. If you would prefer to complete and submit this form electronically, a copy of the form can be located on Blackboard, our website <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/nsemid/research/student-achievements.aspx> or you could contact [Abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Abbey.mcdonald@vuw.ac.nz) to request a copy.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Industry sponsorship**

Name of Sponsor	Notes in relation to the conditions of sponsorship	Value	Year
eg, C&C DHB	50% Student fees paid on successful completion of the course of study	\$	2008

**Special awards, Prizes & Scholarships**

Name of Award/ Prize/ Scholarship	Source/Provider	Notes in relation to the prize/award/scholarship	Value/ Form	Year
eg 'Best clinical innovation'	Mental Health College of Nurses	A project that I developed while doing my practicum course resulted in our clinical team changing the way in which we met with and involved families in patient care	\$500 Award Certificate	2008

**Professional presentations / Seminars /Conferences**

If you gave any professional presentations, seminars or conference papers during the year please provide the details below use APA style for referencing these

*Example:* Student, A. (2008). New models of nursing documentation and their relevance to orthopaedic practice. Paper presented at the Orthopaedic Nurses study day 'Stepping towards the future' held in Wellington, 14 August 2008.

**Publications (Book reviews, editorials, journal articles, chapters, monographs, books etc)**

*Example:* Student, A & Teacher, B. (2008). Mental Health Consumers speak about their Health Education Needs. *Contemporary Nurse*, 5(4), 114-126.

**Other Special Achievements**

If you have had any other special achievements during the year please provide the details.

**Attach and submit with your final assignment thank you**